

Message Text

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ACTION AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8702

INFO AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 2772

AFDROUGHT

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, EAID, CD

SUBJ: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ON FUTURE USG ASSISTANT: DECISIONS
POSTPONED

REF: STATE 229346; STATE 234735 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CHARGE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE
OCT 25 COURTEOUS AND NOT UNFRIENDLY, BUT PRESIDENT STATED
WOULD TAKE NO ACTION OUTSTANDING ISSUES BEFORE NEXT WEEK AFTER
FURTHER CONSULATIONS HIS GOVERNMENT. EXTENSIVELY AND EMOTIONALLY
DEFENDED WIFE AGAINST NYTIMES ALLEGATIONS COMMERCIAL IMPROPRIETY
TO NEAR EXCLUSION COMMENT ON ANY OTHER CHARGES. EMB RECOMMENDS
CONTINUED SUSPENSION PROGRAMS. END SUMMARY

2. MET WITH PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE FOR THIRTY MINUTES AT 1230.
HE LISTENED QUIETLY TEN MINUTE PRESENTATION BASED ON REFTELS
AND WHICH COVERED: USG CONCERN OVER GOC DECISION CEASE ACCEPT
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US AID AFTER APPEARANCE NYTIMES ARTICLE; ROLE JOURNALISTS AND

PRESS IN AMERICA; EMB AND USG ACCEPT NO RESPONSIBILITY CONTENTS ARTICLES APPEARING PRIVATE NEWSPAPERS; SINCERE REGRET THAT ARTICLE APPEARED TIME DEEP MOURNING OF MADAME AND PRESIDENT; NO EMB PERSONNEL HAD OR WOULD COMMENT PERSONAL AFFAIRS MME TOMBALBAYE; HISTORY US ASSISTANCE CHAD; PROBLEMS WHEN THEY OCCURED DISCUSSED FRANKLY AND OFFICIALLY WITH GOC; GOOD QUALITY GRAIN (THIS ONLY MINOR AND PASSING POINT IN PRESS ATTACK); AND, FINALLY, REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION GOC POLICY. USG HAD RESPONDED POSITIVELY GOC REQUEST AIRLIFT THREE SEPARATE YEARS. CURRENT AIRLIFT TERMINATED AT GOC DESIRE. WHAT ARE GOC DESIRES OTHER AREAS CURRENT AND POTENTIAL USG/GOC COOPERATION? WHAT DOES GOC WISH DONE WITH FOODSTUFFS EN ROUTE TO CHAD?

3. PRESIDENT FIRST EXPRESSED WISH THAT HIS APPRECIATION AMERICAN ASSISTANCE, NOTED PREVIOUSLY TO AMBASSADOR MULCAHY, WOULD BE TRANSMITTER TO WHITE HOUSE. NOTED ALSO GREAT JOY IN DISCOVERY TRACES OIL BY US FIRM IN CHAD. THEN STATED HE AND WIFE HAD RETURNED FROM SARH AFTER FUNERAL FATHER-IN-LAW (C. OCT 14) TO FIND NYTIMES OCT 10 ARTICLE. CHARGES UTTERLY WITHOUT FOUNDATION, AND DIRECTED AT WOMAN WHO IS NOT ONLY HIS WIFE BUT WHOM HE RESPECTS AS HIS MOTHER. "I AM BOTH SON AND HUSBAND TO HER." PERHAPS A COUSIN OR TWO MIGHT HAVE AN INTEREST IN ONE OR TWO OR FIVE TRUCKS; NO PEOPLE IS COMPLETELY INNOCENT, BUT TO ATTACK PURITY DEFENSELESS AND INNOCENT WOMAN COULD NOT GO UNNOTICED. THIS, SAID PRESIDENT, WAS BACKGROUND TO HIS DECISION.

4. I EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY PRESIDENT. REITERATED STRONGLY THAT USG NOT RESPONSIBLE PRIVATE ARTICLES. YET GOC ACTION TAKEN AGAINST USG. PRESIDENT SIMPLY DISAGREED THAT ACTION TAKEN DIRECTED AGAINST USG. THEN HE MUSED THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND CRITICISM IN FRENCH PRESS WHERE CHAD HAD ENEMIES, BUT WHY THIS ATTEMPT TARNISH NAME OF CHAD AND OF HIS WIFE AND HIMSELF BEFORE AMERICAN PEOPLE? "THIS IS THE WAY IT BEGAN IN NIAMEY," THE PRESIDENT SAID REFERRING TO THE MILITARY TAKE-OVER IN NIGER, "WITH ACCUSATIONS BY DONORS OF PERSONAL PROFITEERING ON PART OF WIFE OF THE PRESIDENT." PRESIDENT DESCRIBED GOC DROUGHT COORDINATOR DJONOUMA AS "HONEST AND HARDWORKING," ADDING "I KNOW MY MINISTERS AND MY COUNTRY." WHAT THEN WERE THE MOTIVES OF THIS JOURNALIST, WHO HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED IN CHAD, AND OF HIS NEWSPAPER?

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5. I YET AGAIN NOTED THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE POLICY OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND AN ARTICLE BY AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST, AND EMPHASIZED POINT MADE AT BEGINNING PRESENTATION THAT USG NEITHER WISHED CONTINUE PROJECTS WHICH GOC DID NOT DESIRE NOR WISHED END PROJECTS WHICH GOC WISHED CONTINUE. MY GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED ME, IN SUM, TO CLARIFY THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE GOC AND TO ASCERTAIN ITS WISHES FOR FUTURE, REGARDING THE WHOLE

RANGE OF USG/GOC COOPERATION SUCH AS FOOD SHIPMENTS, TECHNICAL COOPERATION, AND CURRENT AND PLANNED PROJECTS. PRESIDENT EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING USG POSITION BUT STATED HE DID NOT YET HAVE ANSWER FOR ME. HE WOULD TALK TO DROUGHT COORDINATOR DJONOUMA TO SEE IF THIS SEASON'S HARVESTS WERE SUFFICIENT FOR CHAD TO DO WITHOUT EXTENSIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE. IF CHAD DID NOT ABSOLUTELY NEED THIS ASSISTANCE IT COULD DO WITHOUT AND THUS AVOID UNWARRANTED CRITICISM. OTHER PROJECTS WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT SAME TIME. IN ANY EVENT, HE "AUTHORIZED" ME SEEK APPOINTMENT WITH HIM NEXT WEEK WHEN HE HOPED GIVE ME CLARIFICATION REQUESTED.

6. COMMENT: PRESIDENT SPOKE QUIETLY. FRIENDLY AND COURTESOUS OF MANNER. BUT HE LEFT IMPRESSION EXERTING EFFORT CONTROL EMOTIONS, PARTICULARLY IN REFERENCES TO WIFE. WHAT HE WANTS AND OBVIOUSLY CANNOT ACHIEVE IS IMMUNITY FROM PUBLIC CRITICISM, PARTICULARLY FROM CRITICISM FROM SOURCES WHICH HE FINDS INVULNERABLE TO COUNTER-ATTACK. GOC DROUGHT COORDINATOR DJONOUMA DEEPLY SHAKEN BY DEPTH OF PRESIDENT'S REACTION, BUT WHETHER SO DEEPLY AS TO DECIDE DO WITHOUT US FOOD ASSISTANCE IS UNCLEAR. MIN PLAN LAMANA, A MAN OF STERNER STUFF, MAY BE EXPECTED CONTINUE PUSH FOR COOPERATION IN PORJECTS UNDER HIS AEGIS, BUT THERE ARE RUMORS ABOUT, UNASSESSABLE AT MOMENT, THAT LAMANA IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE. RECOMMEND THEREFORE CONTINUED SISPENSION FOOD SHIPMENTS AND POSTPONEMENT META AND DAP TEAMS FEW DAYS MORE UNTIL PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONS REACHED. TEAMS UNLIKELY RECEIVE TYPE ASSISTANCE AND CONSIDERATION THEY REQUIRE UNTIL DECISION MADE.
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